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C. Price, *Emotion*, (Cambridge: Polity, 2015), 199 pages. ISBN 9780745656359. Paperback \$22.95.

Carolyn Price's book *Emotion* is not only a clear, concise and insightful introduction to the current debates in philosophy of emotions, but also a very well-argued defence of her functionalist and teleosemantic approach towards emotions. For Price, emotions should be understood in terms of their functions that are supposed come into play, and these functions should be understood in historical terms, as rooted in our evolutionary history, cultural background and personal experience.

The book is composed of an introduction, seven chapters, a conclusion, a very useful glossary and a reference list. The first part of the book (chapters 1-2-3) analyses and discusses the nature of emotions; then, the functioning of emotional evaluation (chapters 4-5); and, finally, the assessment of emotional responses (chapters 6-7). As a side note, I should make the reader aware of an issue related to the table of contents: the author alludes to eight chapters in the introduction and she recalls them throughout the book following this numbering, but the volume counts seven chapters. I guess we should consider the introduction as Chapter 1, and thus, refer to Chapter 1 when the author mentions Chapter 2, and so on. This issue causes some confusion while reading, but besides this, the structure of the volume is very straightforward, and the chain of arguments flows coherently.

In Chapter 1, the author discusses some of the most relevant theories of emotions (James, Solomon, Goldie, Prinz) for developing, in the following chapter, her own account. Other theories should have been mentioned, but Price's aim is not to provide a comprehensive introduction to the many philosophical theories about emotions available today, but to discuss the ones that are more relevant for advancing her own approach. Price denies that emotions are merely bodily changes or feelings (as for James and, with some important differences, Prinz), and assumes their intentional structure (in agreement with Goldie and Solomon). At the same time, she does not endorse the propositional thesis whereby emotional evaluations are understood as judgements (Solomon), but she takes them as midway between judgement and perception, thus developing what she calls the, "weak perceptual model" (96-103).

The functionalist account of emotions is not new – let me just mention Ekman's theory of basic emotions (P. Ekman, "An argument for basic emotions", *Cognition and Emotion* 6, pp. 169-200), which fits very well with the functionalist trend in cognitive science, specifically with evolutionary psychology, where Price would find much empirical evidence to support her approach (the author mentions this literature very briefly at p. 41, but without fully developing an argument from it). Price's new argument provides the functionalist claim with philosophical support, conferring to it a strong explanatory power (p. 47). She also provides some examples of modelling emotions in functional terms. Her aim is not to offer a fine-grained taxonomy of emotions which specifies the proper function pertaining to each emotion or class of emotion (unless it may be a fruitful for the development of her theory) but to clarify why recognising the function of an emotion is the best way of assessing its fittingness.

In fact, understanding emotions in such a framework is useful for detecting the function performed by a specific emotion during a specific situation. This can later be used to recognize a pattern of functions which some emotions naturally perform. By "natural" performance, Price does not mean the function that an emotion is supposed to perform in most cases, but the

function that has been shaped by evolution (pp. 45-46). The function acquires a meaning within a structure, as an intentional system (teleosemantic theory) that has been developed throughout history for achieving certain tasks. Thus, the coherence between an emotion and its pattern is, for Price, a good marker of the suitability of an emotional response and, at the same time, it provides some clues for assessing its flaws - as in the case of recalcitrant emotions.

Therefore, the functionalist claim is not just a descriptive account (what function does an emotion perform); it allows for the assessment of the fittingness of the emotional response. Price ascribes to certain emotions specific functions that they are supposed to perform, thereby contributing to something else. Thus, a normative account seems to be involved in this process, but it is not clear what the source of the normative is— biology or culture, nature or nurture. The examples used by Price in Chapter 2 derive mostly from biology, but Price clearly claims that an emotion may play different functions, and that these functions may pertain to biological needs and social functions and cultural or personal history (p. 48).

Even if this pluralistic account is promising, I am not sure if it is the best tool for assessing fittingness, especially in cases where an emotion performs different functions that may result in incompatibility. Moreover, it is not easy to say which motives should be given more weight during the assessment of fittingness: does the function of jealousy in watching my partner flirt with another woman just serve my biological need for protection and assuring progeny or does it relate to my personal history of a child of a *Don Juan*? Maybe it serves both purposes, but, again, what if there is a conflict between these two realms, say where I have been educated in a hippy society and my natural emotional response of jealousy does not fit with the situation where promiscuous sexual relationships are acceptable? How can I assess the fittingness of my jealousy in this case? How do I consider the educability of emotional responses and the efficacy of self-mastery?

Despite her pluralistic claim regarding different functions, Price was right to give priority to the evolutionary origin of our psychological mechanisms and emotional reactions (cf. pp. 48-49). However, this may be accused of being alienating, especially from the point of view of morality for which the function should, in some ways, express what the agent values more. Her preference for biological explanations is also detectable in one another important claim of her approach, that emotional evaluations (understood by Price in cognitive terms, as those intentional states that initiate an emotional response) reflect our likes and dislikes and our dispositions to experience something as pleasurable or distressing (pp. 121-131). In this case, the fittingness of the emotional evaluation to the situation depends on hedonic preferences. This might imply a version of hedonism, and explain how the objectivity associated with biological functioning and the subjectivity associated with our preferences are integrated in a hybrid theory of emotional evaluations.

But Price does not follow this path, as she claims that preferences often reflect interests, and the latter are understood as the "resources that have helped human being to survive and to produce healthy offspring" (p. 118). Price thus anchors her model in an objective interest-based account, but further discussion is required here.

This analysis carries over to the two chapters on emotional recalcitrance and ambivalence, emotional depth, educability of emotions, emotional contagion, authenticity/inauthenticity and sentimentalism. The general account provided by Price is, again, grounded in likes and dislikes. In the case of inauthenticity and emotional manipulation, for example, an emotional response

should be assessed as inauthentic if it is not rooted in the subject's likes. But are we sure that likes and dislikes provide a trustful scale for assessing our emotional responses? I am quite sceptical about this, as our preferences can be very easily manipulated: how can they truly assess emotional manipulations if they are at risk of manipulation too?

Price uses the example of a teacher who, instead of displaying her gloomy mood during the first meeting with her new class, can welcome her students with a smile and a happy and enthusiastic look (p. 158). Here the teacher is seen as displaying an inauthentic emotion as a case of a clear-sighted manufacture (an emotion that the subject wants to have). But the underlying motivation of this process for me does not seem to be just rooted in the teacher's likes and dislikes, but mostly in what she values — to be an excellent teacher, for example— and what she cares about most—let's say the education of her students. Of course, the teacher may prefer to be an excellent teacher instead of a poor one and enjoy her job, but it seems difficult to argue that her ultimate motivation is rooted in her likes and dislikes.

In conclusion, *Emotion* is an engaging and carefully argued book about the nature of emotions and their functions. It may be an excellent course book for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. I would also recommend it to researchers in the field of philosophy of emotions who have a specific interest in the philosophy of mind and cognitive science. The criticisms I raised here are a way of recognizing the many merits of the volume, and it invites deeper consideration of the relationship between the functionalist claims and the value theory, which I find very promising.

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